BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

Issue: 98-24 4 Pages
June 19, 1998

tel (250) 387-0327
fax (250) 387-0329

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Prices

- **British Columbia's consumer price index (CPI) was 0.3% higher in May than in the same month last year.** PEI, where prices fell to 0.8% below the May 1997 level, was the only province where the inflation rate was lower than in BC. Nationally, the inflation rate was 1.1%, with Saskatchewan (+1.7%) and Quebec (+1.6%) recording the largest increases in the overall price level. In Victoria, the inflation rate was 0.3%. Vancouver's inflation rate was 0.6%.

  Declining shelter (-1.6%) and transportation (-1.1%) costs continued to be the main reasons for BC's very low inflation rate. Most price increases were moderate, but prices for fresh (+14.6%) and other (+12.6%) vegetables, telephone services (+14.3%), and piped gas (+12.6%) and were up sharply from a year earlier. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Population

- **There were 3,953,600 people living in the province on April 1st, up from 3,904,300 a year earlier.** The province's population grew 1.3%, which was well above the national average (+0.8%). Alberta (+1.9%), BC and Ontario (+1.2%) were the only regions to record significant increases in their population. Five of the twelve regions posted declines, with the sharpest drop occurring in Newfoundland (-1.2%), where the population has been shrinking since the beginning of 1994. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **During the first quarter of 1998, BC gained 3,999 people as a result of migration from all sources.** This compares to an increase of 12,896 in the first quarter of 1997. Both international and interprovincial migration contributed to the downturn in the first quarter.

  International migration to the province continued to slow, with a net inflow of 7,544 people in the first quarter. Exceptionally high (11,743) first quarter immigration levels had been observed a year earlier. Immigration to many other parts of the country was also down, and BC's share of the Canadian total remained high (21.3%).

  For the first time since the mid-1980s, BC had a net outflow of people to the rest of Canada, with a loss of 3,555 people in the first quarter.

  Source: BC STATS

The Economy

- **Exports of BC products plunged in April, dropping to 19.5% below the April 1997 level.** BC's exports have been falling since last summer, and year-to-date, were down 15.3% from the first four months of 1997. Exports of forest products (-21.5%, year-to-date) and industrial goods (-21.8%) dropped sharply, and energy (-3.5%) and fish (-2.7%) product exports also fell. Partially offsetting these declines was continued growth in BC's international sales of automotive products (+14.6%) and consumer goods (+9.0%). Consumer goods, in particular, have exhibited strong export growth during the last few years.

  Nationally, exports were up 5.5% year-to-date, with PEI (+62.7%), Manitoba (+14.8%) and Quebec (+12.1%) posting the strongest gains. Low prices for oil and gas pulled down the value of exports from Alberta (-16.4%) and Saskatchewan (-7.5%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Shipments by BC manufacturers were down 3.0% (seasonally adjusted) in April.** The decline was part of a nation-wide trend, which saw shipments falling in all regions except New-

Report **Whistler leads the way**

Did you know...?
Last year, the average Canadian consumed 106 litres of soft drinks, 88 litres of milk and 62 litres of beer. Twenty-five years earlier, milk (96 litres) and beer (80 litres) were the most popular beverages. Soft drinks (57 litres) were a distant third.

foundland (+15.7%) and Alberta (+2.4%). Canadian shipments decreased 0.6%.

Year-to-date, BC shipments were off 6.5%, due to weakness in all three of BC's major manufacturing sectors: wood (-17.1%), paper (-10.3%) and food (-7.6%). Offsetting these losses was strong growth in shipments by manufacturers of transportation equipment (+36.5%), electrical and electronic products (+23.6%), machinery (+14.1%) and clothing (+14.9%).

Source: Statistics Canada

Tourism

- **Seasonally-adjusted room revenues in the province decreased 2.0% in February.** The decline in revenues was largely due to a downturn in Mainland/Southwest, where revenues fell 5.1%. Revenues were also down in Nechako (-4.5%), Cariboo (-2.0%) and the Northeast (-0.1%).

  Kootenay (+11.7%) recorded its third consecutive monthly increase, and posted the strongest revenue growth of any region. Revenues rose more moderately in the North Coast (+4.3%), Vancouver Island/Coast (+1.9%) and Thompson/Okanagan (+1.8%). *Source: BC STATS*

- **BC continued to attract record numbers of visitors in April, with visitor entries 9.1% higher than in the same month last year.** Entries from the US rose sharply (+12.8%), increasing at double-digit rates for the sixth straight month. European entries edged up slightly (+1.3%), but were offset by ongoing weakness in the Asian market. Visits from Asia were down 15.6% (and 18.5% year-to-date), despite a mild resurgence in the number of entries from Japan (+4.2%) and Hong Kong (+3.3%), which accounted for about two-thirds of all Asian entries into BC. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **A growing number of Americans are making day trips into the province.** The number of same-day car trips from the US was up 11.2% in April, compared to the same month last year. However, Canadians making same-day car trips from BC to the States outnumber their American counterparts three to one. At the beginning of the decade, there were nine same-day car trips from BC to the US for every one going the other way. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Communicating by Computer

- **Residents of Alberta (34.5%), BC (33.6%) and Ontario (33.2%) are more likely than other Canadians to use a computer for email, to do electronic banking, or to surf the Internet.** Nationally, 29.3% of Canadians regularly use a computer in this way. Usage rates in other provinces range from 20.1% in Quebec to 32.2% in Nova Scotia.

  Among Canadians who use computers to communicate, the most common application is searching for information on the Internet (84%) or emailing from home (83%). The least common usage is for shopping (9%). One in five Canadians use a computer to do electronic banking from home. *Source: SC, The Daily*

Violence committed by strangers

- **One in three violent crimes reported to the police in 1996 involved offenders who were not acquainted with their victims.** Strangers were responsible for one in five assaults, and one in seven homicides committed in that year. However, eight out of ten robbery victims did not know the perpetrator of the crime.

  Thirty-nine percent of violent crimes committed by strangers involved the use of weapons. This compares to 28% of cases where the offender was known to the victim. Despite this, victims of violent crimes were less likely (41%, compared to 52%) to sustain injuries when the perpetrator was a stranger. Firearms were a factor in only 1% of violent crimes involving individuals known to the victim, but 12% of those involving strangers. The higher incidence of firearms involvement for strangers is related to the predominance of robbery offences. *Source: SC, The Daily*

highlights, Issue 98-24
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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

Infoline Report:

June 12, 1998

Room Revenue in BC's Tourism Regions

Originally published in January 1998 issue of *Tourism Room Revenue*. Annual subscription is $60 + GST

Room revenue in BC's tourism regions

Tourism Room Revenue regularly reports on room revenue by development region, regional district and urban centre. While these geographic areas provide a great deal of detail, their boundaries do not correspond with those of Tourism BC's tourism regions. Because many tourism professionals use the tourism regions as a baseline for planning purposes, this article provides estimates of revenue by tourism regions for 1989 through 1997.

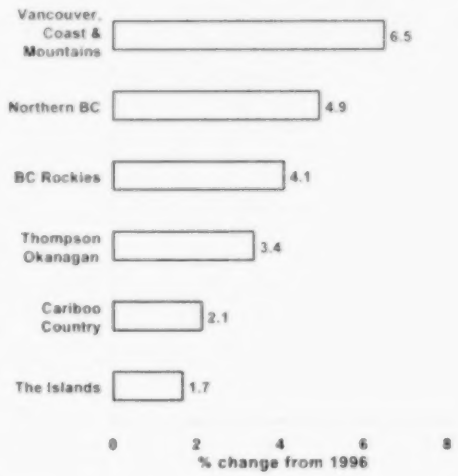
Provincial room revenue up 5%

In 1997, accommodation properties throughout BC generated revenue of over $1.1 billion, up 5.0% from 1996.

Over half this revenue was earned in the Vancouver, Coast & Mountains tourism region. The region also had the fastest growth in 1997, with revenue jumping 6.5% to $664 million. Revenue growth was particularly strong in Whistler, up 11.6% over 1996.

Following Vancouver, Coast & Mountains in growth were Northern BC (+4.9%) and BC Rockies (+4.1%).

Vancouver, Coast & Mountains led 1997 growth



The second largest region, The Islands, had the slowest growth (+1.7%) to stand at $198 million. Most of the increase in revenue was outside the Victoria area. In 1997, revenue in the Capital Regional District was up only 0.2% to $123 million.

Annual Room Revenue by Tourism Region, 1989-1997

	Annual Revenue ($ million)								
Region	**1989**	**1990**	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**
Vancouver, Coast & Mountains	344.4	396.1	390.9	401.6	416.6	473.8	539.2	623.4	663.9
Greater Vancouver[1]	*290.7*	*327.7*	*317.2*	*325.7*	*339.5*	*381.1*	*429.2*	*502.6*	*531.5*
Whistler[2]	*32.0*	*42.6*	*48.4*	*49.4*	*49.3*	*62.6*	*76.8*	*87.4*	*97.5*
The Islands	131.5	145.1	142.1	146.2	154.8	177.6	190.5	194.6	197.8
Victoria[3]	*81.1*	*90.8*	*87.1*	*90.6*	*93.1*	*108.7*	*118.1*	*122.9*	*123.1*
Thompson Okanagan	76.8	83.8	85.5	91.5	101.9	109.5	117.3	122.7	126.9
Northern BC	47.0	52.5	50.6	52.2	57.7	70.0	74.5	77.2	81.0
BC Rockies	41.9	43.6	44.0	44.2	49.6	53.0	57.3	58.8	61.2
Cariboo Country	10.8	11.2	11.8	12.0	13.6	14.8	16.7	16.7	17.0
TOTAL	**652.5**	**732.3**	**724.8**	**747.6**	**794.2**	**898.7**	**995.5**	**1,093.4**	**1,147.9**

Notes: [1] Greater Vancouver Regional District.
[2] District Municipality of Whistler.
[3] Capital Regional District.

BC STATS, Min. of Finance & Corporate Relations, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9V1
Tel: (250) 387-0327 Fax: (250) 387-0329 Web: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: BC.Stats@gems8.gov.bc.ca

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also on the Internet at http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/98	% change on one year ago
BC	3,958.7	1.4
Canada	30,445.0	0.8
GDP and INCOME		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	1997	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	109,347	3.3
GDP *($ 1992 millions)*	98,201	2.2
GDP *($ 1992 per Capita)*	25,039	0.2
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1992 per Capita)*	16,515	-2.3
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Apr	2,738	-9.0
Merchandise Exports (raw) Apr	1,909	-19.5
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Mar	2,681	-0.4
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	May '98	one year ago
BC	110.3	0.3
Canada	108.7	1.1
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	May '98	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,048	2.2
Employed - BC	1,850	1.3
Unemployed - BC	198	12.1
		May '97
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	9.7	8.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.4	9.4
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jun 17/98	June 18/97
Prime Business Rate	6.50	4.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.55	5.20
- 5 year	6.95	7.15
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jun 17/98	June 18/97
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.4634	1.3869
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.6833	0.7210
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Mar '98	one year ago
BC	615.40	1.4
Canada	607.26	2.0

SOURCES:
Gross Domestic Product: Statistics Canada, revised by BC STATS
Population, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

Area Census Profiles

One of the most requested pieces of information from BC STATS is the census profile for a particular area in the province. We have produced these for the past several censuses and have had a 1996 Census profile that has been updated with each wave of data that has been released. There is a profile for each and every regional district, including all the municipalities and subdivisions of the regional district (SRD). We will supply copies to clients who pay between $10 and $30 depending on whether that area is covered by a 20-page, 30-page or 60-page profile. The number of municipalities and SRDs making up an area set the pages and hence the cost. If you are unsure of the contents of these profiles or you do not need that geographic detail, you may be satisfied with the sample set that we have put up on our Internet site.

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/dd/cen_pro.htm

The sample data tables will give you a complete profile for BC and the eight Development Regions. Note that we have not yet added the housing data release, but plan to do so next week.

Released this week by BC STATS

- Tourism Room Revenue, February 1998
- Migration Highlights, First Quarter 1998

Next week

- Consumer Price Index, May 1998
- Business Indicators, June 1998
- Current Statistics, June 1998

BC STATS, Min. of Finance & Corporate Relations, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V1
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